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March 7, 1977

Admiral Stansfeld Turner, Director
Central Intelligence Agency
McLean, Virginia, 22101

Dear Admiral Turner:

I would like to congratulate you on your recent appointment and Senate confirmation as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. I hope you have every success in operating an effective yet just intelligence network.

It is particularly gratifying to me that someone such as yourself has had a successful military career while continuing to be unconstrained in your consideration of new policies and principles. This statement is based on the evaluation of your career, particularly your term as president of the Naval War College, reported in the media. I will shortly be entering Naval O.C.S. after several years experience in business, and must admit I am concerned about how rigid the methods and thought patterns in the military are reported to be. As stereotyped, these would conflict with my way of thinking and operating and I wonder how much freedom for considering alternative approaches I will be able to present to my tasks.

You can perhaps see why your success encourages me. An officer does not have to fit into the military stereotype - rigid patterns of thinking, no allowance for varying precepts in determining his behavior - to advance to a leadership position. He (or nowadays, She) can examine the foundations of his beliefs in light of social changes and make adjustments to fit the altered world relationships. And he can do so without handicapping his career. While I am not looking past a four year commitment, it is good to know that at least some of my superior officers will not be strict, by-the-book operators and thinkers. By being able to question and consider, my experience will be that much more valuable.

Again I wish you success in your position. I trust that under your guidance the CIA will not be further disgraced as it has been, and justifiably so, as various of its activities become known. There is a need for an intelligence agency (and a Military), but their role in today's U.S. no longer what was required twenty years ago.

Sincerely Yours,

Douglas S. Johnson
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